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Letter dated 30 June 2005 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

In addition to my letter of 17 June 2005 (A/59/851-S/2005/397), I have the honour to draw your attention to the reaction of the international community to the so-called "parliamentary elections" of the separatist regime in the occupied Nagorny Karabakh region of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

In particular, the Ministries for Foreign Affairs of France and the Russian Federation, the co-chairing countries of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group, issued press statements in which they reaffirmed their support for the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan. France and the Russian Federation underscored that they did not recognize Nagorny Karabakh as an independent state, and that these elections will not have an impact on the ongoing peace process or on the future status of Nagorny Karabakh.

The Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), in its statement on the same subject, considered these "elections" illegal and in violation of the Geneva Conventions. OIC reaffirmed its position demanding the immediate withdrawal of Armenian forces from all occupied Azerbaijani territories and calling for peaceful negotiations between Azerbaijan and Armenia within the framework of the resolution of OIC, the United Nations and OSCE.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex urgently circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 163, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Yashar **Aliyev**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 30 June 2005 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: Russian]

Commentary of the Information and Press Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation dated 22 June 2005 regarding the recent "parliamentary elections" in Nagorny Karabakh

In connection with the "parliamentary elections" recently held in Nagorny Karabakh, we should like to point out the following.

As is well known, Moscow has consistently supported the principle of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, as well as other fundamental norms and principles of international law. The Russian Federation does not recognize Nagorny Karabakh as an independent State. In our view, its future status must be determined without the use or threat of force and only through political negotiations between all the parties within the framework of the Minsk process.

Moscow considers that the peaceful settlement of the conflict must not depend on the holding of some or other elections in Karabakh. We should like, in particular, to stress that the citizens of the Russian Federation acting as observers in the elections were in Nagorny Karabakh at their own initiative and exclusively in their private capacity.

As for the Russian Federation, it will continue, in close cooperation with its partners in the co-chairmanship of the OSCE Minsk Group (the United States of America, the Russian Federation and France), to vigorously help the Azerbaijanis and the Armenians to reach a settlement of the conflict as soon as possible.

Press statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of France dated 21 June 2005

[Original: French]

With regard to the so-called legislative elections organized on 19 June 2005 by the de facto authorities of Nagorny Karabakh, the French authorities wish to recall that:

- France, like the international community, supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan;
- Consequently, France does not recognize Nagorny Karabakh as an independent State;
- The conditions for determining the future status of Nagorny Karabakh are currently the subject of negotiations between the parties to the conflict within the framework of the Minsk Group, with the mediation of the three co-chairing countries: France, the United States of America and the Russian Federation. In this respect, the elections will not have any effect on either the peace process currently under way or the future status of Nagorny Karabakh;
- Lastly, France, in coordination with its co-chairing partners in the Minsk Group, will resolutely continue its mediation with the Governments of Armenia and Azerbaijan in order to promote a peaceful, equitable and lasting settlement of the conflict. In this regard, the most recent session of the negotiations between the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the two countries was held on Friday, 17 June 2005, in Paris.

(Is it unusual in statements by the spokesman to speak of so-called elections?)

This is indeed the case. Since Nagorny Karabakh is not recognized as an independent State, one cannot organize real legislative elections there.

(Do the elections in Nagorny Karabakh also include the part annexed between neighbouring Armenia and Nagorny Karabakh?)

I do not know the exact definition of the framework of these elections. But, in any case, that does not change anything for us, it does not change in any way our assessment of the elections.

Statement of the Organization of the Islamic Conference entitled "Armenian separatist elections in Nagorno-Karabakh illegal"

Ambassador Atta Al-Mannan Bakheit, official spokesman of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), considered the parliamentary elections conducted by Armenian separatists on 19 June 2005 in the occupied province of Nagorno-Karabakh illegal and in violation of the Geneva Conventions. These elections should be condemned by the international community, he said.

Ambassador Bakheit reaffirmed the OIC position vis-à-vis the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict, which demands the immediate withdrawal of the Armenian forces from all the occupied Azerbaijani territories and calls for peaceful negotiations between Azerbaijan and Armenia within the framework of the resolutions of the OIC, the United Nations, and the OSCE.

The OIC official spokesman reiterated the principled and immutable position of the OIC in support of Azerbaijan's efforts to reach a peaceful settlement of the problem on the basis of the resolutions of international legitimacy.